

The Town of Moriah Town Board held a Public Hearing on the proposed Cold War Veteran Exemption on Thursday, February 9, 2017 at 6:00pm at the Town of Moriah Court House, 42 Park Place, Port Henry, New York.

Present:	Thomas Scozzafava	Supervisor
	Paul Salerno	Councilman
	Timothy Garrison	Councilman
	Thomas Anderson	Councilman
	Lucille Carpenter	Councilwoman

Others Present: William Trybendis, Sharon O'Connor, Arthur Morgan-Water & Sewer Superintendent, Richard LaPier-Building Codes, Jamie Wilson-Highway Superintendent, Charli Lewis-Essex County Real Property, Lohrer McKinstry, Paul Mazzotte-Assessor Chair, Linda Smyth, Larry Hammond and Rose French-Town Clerk.

Supervisor Scozzafava opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

The Supervisor read the legal notice calling for the Public Hearing.

He then introduced Paul Mazzotte, Assessor Chair and Charli Lewis, Director, Essex County Real Property.

Ms. Lewis stated that the Cold War Veteran's Exemption is for the time period September 2, 1945-December 26, 1991. The person has to be a qualifying veteran and they have to live in the home. She explained that this is a 10 year exemption. If a veteran is currently getting the Alternative Veterans Exemption they cannot apply for the Cold War Veterans Exemption, they cannot be getting two (2) benefits. The Alternative exemption does not expire like the Cold War Exemption does. It is up to each Town to adopt a Local Law if they want to offer the Cold War Veterans Exemption. It is up to the County and the School District to adopt their own policies. This exemption does not apply to special districts, only for Town General and Highway. It is up to the Town to choose a maximum exemption and set a limit. This exemption is not reimbursed by the State. There is no way of knowing what the impact would be. Ms. Lewis read an Exemption Impact Report to give the Board an idea of how many exempt people/organizations the Town currently has. The Supervisor stated that when the Town grants an exemption, somebody else has to pick up the slack. Ms. Lewis stated that the Town of Moriah has the highest Veterans Exemption in the County. The Supervisor asked Mr. Mazzotte what his thoughts were on the exemption and Mr. Mazzotte feels that a Veteran definitely deserves it. Councilman Garrison thanked Ms. Lewis for the information, very informative. Mr. Mazzotte asked why the cutoff date is 1991. Councilman Anderson stated that is the date the Soviet Union fell, the Cold War was over. The Supervisor stated that if the Board votes to adopt this Local Law it would have to be at this meeting, because the cutoff date is March 1. Veterans would need time to sign up. Councilman Salerno asked if Ms. Lewis had any idea how many people this would impact and she said she did not. Mr. Mazzotte feels the Town needs to get after the legislators for more help with this and the Supervisor agreed. There was a brief discussion on how much forest land New York State owns, Ms. Lewis said it is 52% of our total acreage.

Floor open to the public:

Larry Hammond spoke. He would like this exemption, he was in during the Cold War. Councilman Salerno asked if this has to be the primary home and Mr. Mazzotte stated that yes, it does. Councilman Salerno also asked if the board should hold another meeting and the Supervisor stated no, we have already had a meeting regarding this matter several years ago. Councilman Garrison reiterated that we cannot predict what the impact would be.

The meeting adjourned at 6:22pm.

Town Clerk